

Application No. 09/674,167  
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.111  
Reply to Office Action dated March 19, 2004  
June 21, 2004

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 28, 29, 36 and 38 have been amended. Currently, claims 28-41 are pending in the application.

The specification was objected because page 30 of the specification did not have a top margin of at least 2.0 cm (3/4 inch), as required by 37 CFR 1.52(a)(1)(ii). By this amendment, applicants respectfully resubmit a copy of original page 30 from the specification attached hereto. This page includes a top margin of at least 2.0 cm (3/4 inch) and shows the reactant and the product as requested by the Examiner. It is respectfully submitted that this objection has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claim 29 was rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

The Examiner stated that the recitation that G can be "N-ethyl-D-mannosamine" (claim 29, line 6) does not appear to be supported by the disclosure originally filed, and hence constitutes new matter. The Examiner also stated that applicants should note that the remaining members of the recited Markush group are supported by page 16, lines 5-9, of the specification

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and that "N-ethyl-D-arabitylamine" is given as the last member of this group. By this amendment, claim 29 has been amended to change "N-ethyl-D-mannosamine" to -- N-ethyl-D-arabitylamine -- as suggested by the Examiner. It is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn in view of this amendment.

Claims 28-41 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner stated that the term "at least one of a natural fiber and a regenerated fiber containing at least one chelate-forming functional group" (claim 28, lines 2-3; claim 36, lines 4-6) was indefinite as to the scope of this claim, since it is not clear whether the recited chelate-forming functional group applies to both the natural and regenerated fibers, or only to the regenerated fiber. The Examiner also stated that since it appears that this modifier was intended to apply to both types of fibers, applicants are advised that an amendment inserting --, said fiber -- after "fiber" in line 3 of claim 28 and line 5 of claim 36 would overcome this portion of the rejection. By this amendment, claims 28 and 36 have been amended to insert --, said fiber -- after "fiber" in lines 3 and 5, respectively, as suggested by the Examiner.

Similarly, the Examiner stated that the recitation of "providing a natural fiber and/or a regenerated fiber into a

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filter having a functional group" (claim 38, lines 3-4) was indefinite, since it was not clear whether the recited fibers or the filter have the recited functional group. By this amendment, claim 38 has been amended to clarify that the fiber has the recited functional group as suggested by the Examiner.

The Examiner also stated that the term "a residue lacking an amino group selected from ..." (claim 29, lines 2-3) was somewhat indefinite as to the limitation intended. The Examiner also stated that applicants are advised that an amendment reciting that G is a sugar alcohol residue in which an amino group is eliminated from the recited group members, as disclosed in lines 4-9 on page 16 of the specification, would overcome this portion of the rejection. By this amendment, claim 29 has been amended to recite "wherein G is a residue of a chain sugar alcohol lacking an amino group selected from the group consisting of D-glucamine, D-galactamine, D-mannosamine, D-arabitylamine, N-methyl-D-glucamine, N-ethyl-D-glucamine, N-methyl-D-galactamine, N-ethyl-D-galactamine, N-methyl-D-mannosamine and N-ethyl-D-arabitylamine" as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn in view of these amendments.

Also, in view of foregoing claim amendments and remarks, it

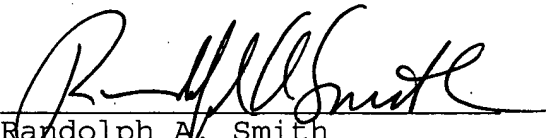
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is respectfully submitted that the application is now in  
condition for allowance and an action to this effect is  
respectfully requested.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding the  
amendments or these remarks, the Examiner is requested to  
telephone the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 21, 2004

  
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